

increase the salaries \$100 a month which isn't bad. As far as I'm concerned I think it's a 50% increase. I'm not too sure. Some people may consider it something else, but that's what I have offered to this body. Instead of \$200 to \$500 a month, go from \$200 to \$300. I'd ask for the adoption of this amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Labedz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I'm going to have to object to Senator Barnett's amendment. For one thing LB 837 is entirely permissive. It's not mandatory and actually it doesn't require or demand or have any increase whatsoever. No increase could be affected prior to 1979 and any increase that would be affected would require formal action by the directors of the board in an open meeting. In other words we set the maximum at \$500 but that doesn't mean the increase will go at \$500. They may decide to make it \$300. It will be entirely up to the board and we should remember that all directors are answerable to the rate payers who elected them and they will be the ones that are setting the increase. We are not setting the increase here on the floor of the Legislature. It is strictly coming from the board. We are just telling them that they cannot raise it more than \$500. I object to Senator Barnett's amendment and urge the members of the body to reject it also. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER: I, too, oppose Senator Barnett's amendment and I would myself, support raising the amount to the full \$500. I see no reason that we should not pay the directors of our public power districts enough money so that they can put in the time that's necessary to get some accountability from the public power entities. Senator Barnett raises the issue of legislative salaries and I too, would like to raise that and I think that we stand now in the same position as the voters of the state do when they face the salary question on the ballot and they generally turn down our salary increases because they're frustrated at the rising cost of government. Well, we're frustrated with the cost of the public power districts and the utilities but we should not take it out on the Boards of Directors. I think they should be paid a reasonable salary. I think they should be allowed to take time to try and find out what's happening in the power districts. I think that people who run for that office and who serve on that office should be free to try and get involved in controlling the power districts. I was involved in trying to talk to some people about running for the Nebraska Public Power Board and one of the concerns they had is that if they were going to be effective board members to try and monitor this multi-million dollar entity which the power districts are, it was going to take a lot of time and it was going to take a lot of time away from their jobs and that was going to cost them money and based on the current salary of the power districts, they did not feel that they could do the adequate job and take the amount of time necessary so they chose not to run. Now how are we going to get any accountability from our power districts if we don't provide the funds, the money to the board, so they can take the time to learn the issues. Power districts are certainly spending